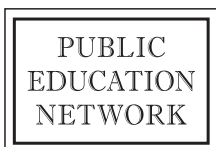


Open to the Public

Speaking Out on "No Child Left Behind"

A Report from 2004 Public Hearings

ILLINOIS



Public involvement. Public education. Public benefit.

Sponsored by Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform
and Public Education Network



Public Education Network

Public Education Network (PEN) is a national organization of local education funds (LEFs) and individuals working to improve public schools and build citizen support for quality public education in low-income communities across the nation. PEN believes an active, vocal constituency is the key to ensuring that every child, in every community, benefits from a quality public education. PEN and its members are building public demand and mobilizing resources for quality public education on behalf of 11.5 million children in more than 1600 school districts in 33 states and the District of Columbia. In 2004, PEN welcomed its first international member, which serves almost 300,000 children in the Philippines.

Our Vision

Every day, in every community, every child in America benefits from a quality public education.

Our Mission

To build public demand and mobilize resources for quality public education for all children through a national constituency of local education funds and individuals.

Hearing Held in Chicago, Illinois

October 13, 2004

4:00–7:00 PM

Garfield Park Fieldhouse, Chicago, IL

Acknowledgements

Hearing Partner:

Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform
407 South Dearborn Street, Suite 1500

Chicago, IL 60605

Phone: 312-322-4880

Fax: 312-322-4885

www.crosscity.org

Diana Nelson, executive director

Lauren Allen, senior program director

Dion Miller Perez, Chicago coordinator

Janet Lyons, administrative director

Hearing Officers:

Arnold Fege, director of public engagement,
Public Education Network, Washington, DC

Warlene Gary, president, National PTA, Chicago, IL

Peter Martinez, director, Center for School
Leadership, University of Illinois at Chicago

Diana Nelson, executive director, Cross City
Campaign for Urban School Reform, Chicago, IL

Ken Rolling, executive director,
Parents for Public Schools, Chicago, IL

Witnesses:

Parents/Community Members:

Ismael Vargas, Parents United for
Responsible Education

Wanda Hopkins, Parents United for
Responsible Education

Mildred Wiley, Bethel New Life

Students:

Richard Guss, 10th grade student,
Harlan Community Academy

Roy Ramirez, 12th grade student,
Senn High School

Jamie Smith, 11th grade student,
Austin Community Academy High School

Business/Civic Leaders:

John J. McLaughlin, Independent Consultant

Paul Zavitkowsky, Civic Committee,
University of Illinois at Chicago

Ann Couter, Voices for Illinois Children

Public Testimony:

Angela Perez Miller, parent

Don Washington, parent

Gretchen McDowell, Illinois PTA

Laurie Merriweather, Oak Isabel O'Keefe

Elementary; LSC parent representative; NCLB
Parent Advisory Council Chair

Sarah VanderWicken, Chicago Lawyer's
Committee for Civil Rights

Achile Charlton, Crib Collective

Jane Montez, professor, University of Illinois
College of Education

Gwendolyn Stewart, ACORN

Stacey Ruben Silver, parent

Jose Rico, board member, local community-based
education organization

Valencia Rias, parent and local school council par-
ent representative, Jones College Prep

Bernadette Anderson, parent

Bea Richards, parent

Mary Sherrod, NCLB Illinois Steering Committee;
National Coalition for Title 1/Chapter 1 Parents

Devin Jones, Southwest Youth Collaborative

Support for the NCLB hearings was provided by:

The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation

The George Gund Foundation

Open Society Institute

Report Writer:

Anne Lewis, education policy writer

Designer:

Kelly Griffith, kelly@rightbraincreative.net



No Child Left Behind In Illinois

No Child Left Behind has increased accountability for Illinois school districts to serve all of their students in the state, but the massive federal law is failing to have the impact it could because of its flaws and the state's inequitable funding, according to witnesses at a public hearing on NCLB in Chicago in October 2004.

Public Education Network and the Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform co-sponsored the animated, crowded hearing, attended by more than 200 people. It was an opportunity for the voices of those with limited access to policymakers—students, parents, and community leaders—to tell their stories about NCLB's impact and offer recommendations on how to improve it. Their testimony ranged over many issues, but certain themes emerged from the hearing:



- Accountability is important, but the measurement system for NCLB is not rational, and the tests do not cover the full range of knowledge and skills students should have.
- Paper certification that defines a highly qualified teacher fails to describe all the qualities of a good teacher; in low-income schools, the teaching quality is extremely uneven.
- Parents are not receiving clear, timely and adequate information that will allow them to make informed choices for their children; stronger neighborhood schools are preferred over transferring to other schools.
- The inequality of funding for public schools in Illinois makes the demands under NCLB for low-performing schools to improve rapidly difficult, if not impossible.

“We think that the results of testing can provide new directions for schools and new opportunities for students. However, if the expectations for some groups seem unrealistic to parents and the general public, then the force of not meeting AYP is lost. If everyone is said to be failing because of a subgroup, even schools that the public understands to be succeeding with a vast majority of their students, the likelihood is that less attention will be paid to a school’s AYP status.”

—Gretchen McDowell,
Illinois PTA



The “Why” of the PEN Hearings

Shortly after NCLB was passed in 2001, Public Education Network (PEN) began an intensive examination of the law to determine the rights and privileges it accords to parents and community members. Approximately 10,000 print copies of the resulting publication, *Using NCLB to Improve Student Achievement: An Action Guide for Community and Parent Leaders*, have been requested by organizations throughout the country, with more than 40,000 copies downloaded from the PEN website. In addition, a series of NCLB action briefs, developed by PEN in partnership with the National Coalition for Parent Involvement In Education, have been downloaded more than 25,000 times.

With this demand for information on NCLB as background, PEN held a series of state hearings to give the public a structured way to enter the debate on the pros and cons of NCLB and the effects, both positive and negative, the law is having on schools and students. Nine hearings took place in eight states over a five-month period. Each state hearing was conducted in partnership with local organizations and presided over by a panel of state and national hearing officers.

PEN hopes these forums broadened the public debate about NCLB and provided policymakers with information on how their work encourages or discourages quality education for children. The findings from PEN's NCLB hearings will be transmitted to decision makers at the national, state, and local levels to help them determine which aspects of NCLB the public supports, what are the primary concerns, and what mid-course corrections are needed to achieve the most beneficial results for all students.



The Illinois Context

Illinois' overall accountability system relies on solid standards and tests aligned with them, according to an analysis by *Education Week's* annual "Quality Counts" report on state reforms. The state is one of only 14 whose tests are aligned with their standards in each subject at elementary, middle, and high school. The test format includes both multiple choice and extended responses. The Chicago Public Schools still use a norm-referenced test, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, and report scores on both tests, which can be confusing to parents and the public. There also is a discrepancy between student achievement results on the state reading and math assessments, and the results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, with the percentage of students proficient much lower for the latter tests.



Fast Facts

Number of students: 2 million in K-12

Student percentages by sub group: black, 21 percent; Hispanic, 17 percent; Asian/Pacific Islander, 4 percent; economically disadvantaged, 38 percent; limited English proficient, 6 percent; students with disabilities, 14 percent.

Highly qualified teachers: Classrooms not taught by highly qualified teachers, 2 percent; classes not taught by highly qualified teachers in high-poverty schools, 5.4 percent.

Percentage of schools not making Adequate Yearly Progress:

Achievement gap: At grade 3 in reading, 64 percent of black students scored below standard, 51 percent of Hispanic students, and 17 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander, compared to 24 percent of white students; at grade 8 in reading, 54 percent of black students scored below standard, 53 percent of Hispanic students, 20 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander students, and 27 percent of white students.

In 2003 the Illinois State Board of Education adopted criteria for determining “highly qualified” teachers under NCLB. Current teachers must hold a valid certificate for the grade level and meet one of five options: pass the elementary/middle grades test or the subject-matter test for their assignment; have a major or coursework equivalent to a major in their assigned subject; have a master’s degree in the subject; be certified by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, or have an endorsement/coursework equivalent to meet Illinois minimum requirements for the subject area assigned.

“Quality Counts” downgraded Illinois on teacher quality because it does not require nor finance mentoring for all new teachers or evaluate their teaching using performance-based assessments.

Illinois does better than the average for all states in terms of student engagement in schools, according to NAEP, and also regarding parent involvement in schools. The average elementary

class size is higher than the national average, and the state has no policies to reduce or limit class size.

The state’s performance on finance equity is the worst in the nation, according to Education Week. It contributes only 40 percent of the cost of local public education, and spends less than the national average of total taxable resources on education, ranking 32 out of 50 states. Moreover, it is third from the bottom in its wealth-neutrality score, meaning that wealthier districts have a larger share of state/local revenues for education than property-poor districts.

The testimony at the PEN/Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform public hearing in Chicago touched on many of the issues in these statistics, but generally the testimony focused on the three components of NCLB that PEN considers the most critical: accountability, teacher quality, and building a supportive community.



What We Learned About Accountability

Asked for an impromptu show of hands on whether to abolish, leave at is, or improve NCLB, the Chicago audience of parents, community activists, students and others overwhelmingly wanted to keep it—but improve it. Central to their support of NCLB is its emphasis on accountability for all. Don Washington, associate director of the Community Renewal Society, explained:

Probably the best thing it (NCLB) has done is to shed light on the fact that there are many schools that have labored under the misconception that they're the greatest places to be, when they're actually not serving large sectors of their population. It has made us shift our focus from just national education of the majority to all of the minority groups in the United States, and put a spotlight on how they're performing as well, and how the education system is not performing for them.

Representing the Union League Club of Chicago, Tiny McLaughlin said the business community supports NCLB because "it is a first attempt at changing particularly the education of low-income Americans." People are more inclined to stay with the status quo that reach agreement on common solutions, she said, so NCLB, even with its many flaws, "is a good starting point for us to move...toward more diverse accountability standards."



Support for accountability, however, did not mean that those who testified approved of the current assessment systems. Many found that they were narrowing the curriculum, distorting good teaching practices, and missing the essence of skills and attributes students should have to be successful as adults.

Students often were the most critical of the impact of testing, primarily because of its effect on changing the priorities of teachers. No one was more candid than Jamie Smith, a junior at Austin Community Academy High School. She described how students had to adjust to different test schedules and strategies as principals changed, sometimes each year. Still, only six percent of the students at her school read at grade level, and she wondered pointedly why there was so much focus on passing a test and not enough on reading skills.

Ismael Vargas, a parent activist in Chicago, also said that educators' response to testing has been irrational. Schools are only focusing on how to keep off the need-improvement list under NCLB and not emphasizing the broader goals of education, including the arts, he said. A teacher educator from the University of Illinois said the curriculum for future teachers focused on helping students acquire deep understandings of content-and do

"How will we be able to pass the test if we can't understand what the words on the test are asking us? If we don't understand those words, what's the purpose? I think most of the students feel as if all we do is go to school to learn to pass this test. Please stop teaching me the strategies to pass the test. Teach me how to solve the equation. Teach me the formulas. Teach me how you came to the conclusion that there is the right answer. I can pass the test. Teach me what I need to know so that I can understand what I'm doing."

well on standardized tests-but in their student teaching experiences, her students "are participating in the stopping of meaningful instruction for skill and drill test instruction." This is causing them to "panic" about their career choices, and question if they are being prepared for "high-speed test instruction," said Jane Montez, a professor at the University of Illinois College of Education.

Adults had many suggestions for creating better tests, saying that policymakers and the education system should be held accountable for current inadequate measures. Don Washington wanted all testing to be criterion-referenced, measuring what students know against a standard, rather than a national average as in norm-referenced testing. He also asked why there was no discussion of national tests, which would set common standards in core subjects and allow citizens "to actually communicate with each other." Angela Perez Miller, a former teacher and now a member of the 2nd Legislative District Education Committee, criticized the use of test results "for purposes that were never the intent of the tests" such as high-stakes decisions. She particularly opposed the use of tests normed for mainstream speakers of English with



non-English-speaking students, calling instead for “culturally and linguistically appropriate assessment policies and practices.” Speaking with great emotion, Miller said: “One thing I know with certainty is that these standardized tests cannot measure the creative minds and talents of my three grandchildren, and I emphasize creative.”

Several witnesses faulted the NCLB requirement for testing students with special needs as “unreasonable,” and one predicted this provision would contribute to cynicism about all of NCLB. For Gretchen McDowell, representing the Illinois PTA, the most serious impact of NCLB in her state has been a lowering of standards because of the law’s narrow test focus.

“The Illinois PTA was heavily involved in the creation of the Illinois learning standards.... The task force that I served on that designed the assessment system—or the one we hoped to have—was designing the next generation of our state tests (that would) furnish all the standardized testing for a school district that it would need to meet NCLB testing provisions and assess students based on all of the Illinois learning standards. This would have saved districts money, the use of testing time, and provided a sense of how the district’s students were doing compared to the rest of the state.... However, using the excuse of a tight budget, in spite of monies for testing provided by NCLB, and using the testing requirements of NCLB as a rationale, our state legislature has eliminated all testing except that required by NCLB. We are now not going to test writing or social studies, or fine arts, or health, or physical development. I know this is a result of the short-sightedness of our legislature and governor and cannot directly or totally be blamed on NCLB, but it’s another object lesson in

unintended consequences and one that will not lead to greater efforts for educating a well-rounded student population.”

A similar message came in testimony by Sarah VanderWicken, representing the Chicago Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights. She urged NCLB to be modified to give more attention to local accountability and local assessments so that community values could become part of the accountability system. If a local community really values citizenship as a goal of schooling, for example, “then that should be built into judgments as to whether the school is meeting its goals,” she said.



What We Learned About Teacher Quality

Illinois' teacher preparation policies only recently fell in line with the NCLB "highly qualified teacher" requirements, and though in compliance on paper, the changes do not actually guarantee much more than the status quo. Until 2003, middle-grade teachers only needed a minor in the subjects they teach. That has been increased to a major or its equivalent. The "equivalent" phrase in the policies adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education actually gives teachers many options for meeting the NCLB mandates, including using years of teaching experience. This flexibility could result in avoiding NCLB's emphasis on content background.

In other ways, the *Education Week* analysis of Illinois' teacher quality policies earn the state only a C+. Teacher candidates do not have a minimum time requirement for student teaching or clinical experience. The state does not require and does not fund mentoring of new teachers or performance-based assessments of beginning teachers.

Several hearing witnesses expressed disappointment in what they considered a weak system of recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers for Illinois. Without good teachers, they pointed out, low-performing schools cannot make Adequate Yearly Progress. Nor should teachers be dividing their time between teaching and meeting certification requirements, one father complained. "My son feels that what he is getting as a teacher is leftovers, because the teacher is focusing on his certification," he said. This Cicero father, Ismael Vargas, also wanted to know why he could not exercise his rights under NCLB to get information about his children's teachers:



Many of them (our children) are staying behind because there's no clear understanding of our rights....If I want to know about my son's teachers, if they're certified, I'm supposed to go ask the school. When you go and ask the school about a teacher and if the teacher is certified, they won't tell you. And you won't get straight answers about who is teaching your son or your daughter."

With little information about teachers in their schools, most of the witnesses who addressed the "highly qualified teacher" aspect of NCLB discussed what that phrase meant to them. Mildred Wiley, vice president of Special Initiatives in Education for Bethel New Life, called for teachers with the skills to help students learn in different ways. Many schools on Chicago's west side, she said, are low performing and dropout rates are so high there are more students out of school than in, "but there are young people in these schools who can demonstrate what they know. Yet, according to what we receive in the mail, we have qualified teachers. But if our qualified teachers aren't engaging these young people to be in the system, so what?"

Students were brutally frank about paper certification and true, high-quality teachers. A 10th grader at Harlan Community Academy had no confidence in certification standards as a gauge of a qualified teacher. Richard Guss said that even in his low-performing south-side Chicago high school students come to school to learn and do not care if a teacher is certified, only if he/she "teaches in a way that I can understand it, in a way that I will want to come back and learn more." He drew a contrast between two of his current teachers:

"My algebra teacher is an excellent teacher. He's engaged. He's just into it. We have to do this and do that, but everyone shows up to this class on time....But then I go to a snooze fest. This teacher acts like a spokesman for the 'Clear Eyes' commercials....We sit there and have to do things, too, like an autobiography and PowerPoint, but half the students in the class are sleeping....If my algebra teacher was not qualified but he's teaching me what I have to know in order for me to graduate in the next two years, would I care?"

Asked what it would take to get his fellow students to come to school, Guss suggested that the hearing officers try to feel what it is like to attend school in his neighborhood. Students have to see real connections between school work and the consequences of not getting an education, he said. "I almost got shot the other day coming from school. We're walking from school and all of a sudden-pow, pow, pow," he told the hearing. Students need connections to futures that would help them do something about their lives, but "you can't sit up in front of the class and lecture to us because it will not click for most of us." Roy Rodriguez, a senior at Senn High School, shared his thoughts on how to encourage his fellow students to come to school. "They can't stand high school," he said, "because the teachers don't know how to teach well. They might be smart. They have credentials. They know all the



stuff. But they don't know how to teach it." Not only should teachers differ their instructional strategies, he said, they also should take clues from the community organizations he participates in and encourage students to get an education, "so you can go out there and help your community." Students need a link with the real world, he explained.

Ismael Vargas echoed the students' points. Many teachers earn certification and become teachers, "but we hardly see teachers that are doing their job because of their heart, and not because they're just going to pick up a paycheck," he said. Parents and the schools will see changes when there are enough teachers "who want to get these students to focus and to be better off in the future." Right now, he does not see any hope that this will happen.

Mildred Wiley recommended that the criteria for a qualified teacher include being able to create strong relationships with students that tell students "there's somebody there who is interested in me, who cares that I'm here and that I get it." Moreover, teachers and principals, she said, need to learn about local school councils and how to partner with parents and communities. Now that NCLB assures parent involvement and an opportunity to develop a relationship with the school, she sees "a possibility of hope." There would be less teacher attrition, she added, if school facilities were in better condition.

ACORN representative Gwendolyn Stewart described her group's project, "grow your own teacher," which helps neighborhood residents with some education and/or child development training to continue their education and to become certified teachers. "If they live in the neighborhood, they already know the children, and they'd be much more apt to stay with the board of education than the ones we send all over the world to get," she said.



What We Learned About Building a Committed Community

The major premise of NCLB's emphasis on parent involvement is that when parents have sufficient information, they will be able to make informed choices for their children. These include the two primary intervention strategies to help children in low-performing schools-transfer to a higher performing school or select a provider for supplemental education services. As a knowledgeable force, parents and community members also will be able to demand higher expectations and results from schools needing improvement.

The problem with this scenario in Illinois is that the premises of NCLB have not materialized in any meaningful way. Information that was supposed to empower parents and communities, for example, has not been readily available, timely, or clear. Jose Rico, president of the board of the Telpochcalli Community Education Project, told the hearing that the dissemination of information to parents and community about how schools are performing "has been simply disastrous." He said he was sure he was not the only parent in the room who had not been told about changes in the after-school program. His principal did not know her school's ranking until she read it in the newspaper; Rico has tried to be informed and involved, but he was discouraged:



"With the information that parents get, we could...look at how we could improve schools. But mainly, what parent empowerment comes down to is vision and leadership at the school level. If we look at all the reports and we sit down and talk with the teachers about how we think things should go, if the vision doesn't exist at the school and if the leadership of the school is not with the parents, it's going to mean nothing....In our organization we work with parents to go through a process where they really learn about education in this country and how to improve it. When we do that, and then we look at what the mandates from central office are and how they conflict with our plans, and then we look at what the mandates from Springfield are and how they conflict with our plans, that's really disempowering."

Rico warned, however, that data alone cannot empower parents. "It gives parents something to begin a conversation with at the school," he said, but it is idealistic that data without explanations and solutions can set up "a bad dynamic between parents organizations and parents and the school itself." For example, his son attends a school where less than 50 students take part in testing because 90 percent of the students are English language learners. The testing puts an onus on students such as his son, who is in special education, and does not really tell parents about the quality of the school.

A local school council member, Valencia Rias, said that parents have the power and opportunity to make choices and influence change, if they ask for information. However, "often our parents are not asking for it because they don't even know it exists. And even if they know it exists, they often don't...have access to it even if they ask for it." School systems need to let parents know the information is available and make it clear. When the NCLB supplementary education services began the year before, "the form was in legal language," Rias said. "You needed a Mississippi lawyer to decipher it." She also reminded the hearing officers that the country is becoming bilingual, and communication with parents has to be accessible to those who do not speak English.

Despite the problems in implementing the choice provisions of NCLB, a parent and former principal, Paul Zavitkovski, said choice was a necessary policy for parents whose children are trapped in low-performing schools. Part of the Chicago school reform efforts since the early 1990s, and now with the Center for School Leadership at the University of Illinois/Chicago, he said 16 years (since the reforms of 1988) "is a very long time for schools that are chronically underperforming and chronically underserving children to get better." He urged support for the Chicago Public Schools new plan, Renaissance 2010, which will reconstitute low-performing schools and give parents choices. Laurie Merriweather, a local school council member and chair of the NCLB parent advisory council, however, said that the NCLB choice provision had led to a higher mobility rate, or was unavailable to parents because of overcrowding. Instead, she said, parents need help on supporting their children academically where they are.



Bernadette Anderson admonished the parents in the audience to become informed, to take advantage of the state's parent information resource center, and use the information to ask questions. Parents need to know where are the resources going that the Title I accountability funds have allocated to schools needing improvement and NCLB's provisions for parent involvement. "We need to be loud and clear," she said, and say when things are unacceptable. Her immediate example: why was her son, in a 10th grade English honors class, given a 5th grade textbook for his class?

Another parent, Wanda Hopkins, who is a member of two local school councils and of Parents United for Responsible Education, had plenty of questions. She wanted to know who was accountable for spending money available under NCLB at the local schools, and who was holding supplementary education services providers accountable. Last year, she said, "the programs started months and months late, and parents are still waiting on reports on their children." She also asked why magnet schools were exempt from the list of receiving schools for parents wanting to transfer their children and why the Renaissance 2010 plan, which meant the closing of many schools in low-income and African-American communities, was the only way to aggressively change performance. In the end, Hopkins said all of these unanswered questions led her to wanting to make a citizens' arrest of Chicago school officials, a suggestion that met with applause.

Many witnesses spoke about the effects of underfunding and inequitable funding, primarily because of the high dependence of school districts on local property taxes in Illinois. Adding to the burden is the failure to fully fund the requirements under NCLB, said Ann Courtner, budget and policy initiative director for Voices for Illinois Children. Money matters a lot, she said, and "the federal government must do much more than punish and stigmatize schools."

Harlem Community Academy student Richard Guss testified dramatically about the difference money makes:

"I asked my principal one day why we did not have the money to fund something the Student Council wanted to do. Why does a higher-achieving school close to us have the club we wanted? Her response was that...every school gets the amount of money they need according to how big they are and what needs they have. If that's the case, why don't we have a website like theirs, that's booming. Why don't we have the money to get a tile in the floor fixed? Why don't we have money to get air conditioning or new windows? Are these other schools...getting a lot more funding to do what they want because their kids are smarter? Or is it that they find that their kids need a little bit more coaching? Now, if that's the case, then we need as much money as we can get."



Public Education Network Online Survey Results

From August 10 through November 17, 2004, Public Education Network, through its GiveKidsGoodSchools.org advocacy website, conducted a survey on various aspects of *No Child Left Behind*. The online survey garnered 12,000 responses from people around the country who joined in this vibrant and vital national debate on public education.

PEN analyzed the data, which was disaggregated by state, to provide a snapshot of knowledge and attitudes about *No Child Left Behind*. The results for Illinois are on the following pages.



Demographics (420 respondents)

Age

Under 18	0%
18-24	3%
25-34	14%
35-50	44%
50-65	36%
Over 65	3%

Race/Ethnicity

African-American	5%
Asian or Pacific Islander	1%
Hispanic/Latino/Mexican	3%
Native American or Alaskan Native	0%
White	86%
Other	5%

Gender

Female	71%
Male	29%

Education

Less Than High School	1%
High School Grad or GED	2%
Some College	14%
Four-year College Degree or More	83%



Please identify yourself
(check all that apply)

Educator	63%
Elected Official	5%
Parent/Guardian of Current Public School Student	33%
Parent/Guardian of Former Public School Student	25%
Community Activist	14%
Concerned Community Member	49%
Business Person	9%

Did you vote in the last election?
(check all that apply)

School board election	70%
Mayor	72%
State legislator	83%
Governor	87%
US Congress	85%
US President	88%
None of the above	4%

**Please identify the type of school(s)
your child(ren) attend.**
(check all that apply)

Public school	64%
Private school (non-religious)	2%
Parochial or religious school	5%
Home school	1%
Too young to attend school	7%
I do not have children	18%



How They Responded to the Survey Questions

Have you heard of the NCLB Act?

Yes	99%
No	1%

What do you know about NCLB?

Have heard of the law, but know little about its provisions	10%
Know about some provisions of the law	47%
Have an in-depth knowledge of the law	43%

Where have you received most of your information about NCLB? (check all that apply)

Parents	12%
Teachers	35%
Administrators	58%
Other school personnel	28%
Community organizations	12%
Local newspapers	41%
Local television	20%
Radio	14%
National media	41%

Do you believe NCLB is:

A good law and should be continued without change	5%
A law that needs changing	66%
A law that should be repealed	29%

Does NCLB require too much testing, too little, just right?

Too much	69%
Too little	6%
Just right	8%
Don't know	17%

Do you believe that EVERY child in the country will score at grade level or above by the end of the 2013 school year, as required by NCLB?

Yes	2%
No	93%
Unsure	5%



Should states and school districts be required to report test scores on the basis of disability, income, English language proficiency, race/ethnicity?

Yes	49%
No	34%
Unsure	17%

Do you believe that a single test can tell if the entire student body needs academic improvement?

Yes	3%
No	95%
Unsure	2%

Do you believe that a single test can tell if the individual students are performing satisfactorily?

Yes	4%
No	95%
Unsure	1%

Do you believe that every child should have a qualified teacher?

Yes	99%
No	0.5%
Unsure	0.5%

Do you believe that, by 2005, every school will meet the NCLB requirement that all teachers must be qualified in the core subjects that they teach?

Yes	13%
No	76%
Unsure	11%

Have you received information from you school district about the qualifications of teachers in your schools?

Yes	50%
No	50%



How would you rate the teachers in your local schools?

No qualified teachers	0%
Some qualified teachers	12%
Many qualified teachers	48%
All qualified teachers	33%
I have no way of judging	7%

Have schools in your community been labeled as “needing improvement” or “failing” because of NCLB?

Yes	58%
No	31%
Unsure	11%

Are you getting enough information about the performance of the schools in your community?

Yes	64%
No	36%

Has NCLB made a difference in any of the following areas?
(check all that apply)

Access to information about schools	27%
Student performance	15%
Parental involvement	8%
Teacher quality	14%
None of the above	60%



Have you been asked to become involved in any of the following educational activities related to NCLB? (check all that apply)

Developing state standards	7%
Developing the state test required by NCLB	4%
Developing the state and/or local report cards required by NCLB	6%
Developing the district Title I parent involvement policy	9%
Giving input into the district annual Title I program	14%
Making recommendations for what constitutes a "highly qualified teacher" under NCLB	5%
Participating in the improvement team for schools that were identified as needing improvement under NCLB	17%
None of the above	68%

NLCB gives parents and students attending low-performing schools a choice option (transferring to another public school within the school district).

Do you think this option will help students perform better academically?

Yes	17%
No	83%

NLCB gives parents and students attending low-performing schools a supplemental education services option (providing tutoring beyond the regular school day to help students meet the standards).

Do you think this option will help students perform better academically?

Yes	67%
No	33%



For More Information . . .

Public Education Network

601 13th Street, NW
Suite 710 South
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-628-7460
Fax: 202-628-1893
www.publiceducation.org

**PEN's advocacy website,
GiveKidsGoodSchools.org:**
www.givekidsgoodschools.org

Education Commission of the States

700 Broadway, #1200
Denver, CO 80203-3460
Phone: 303-299-3600
Fax: 303-296-8332
<http://www.ecs.org>

Illinois Department of Education

<http://www.isbe.state.il.us/>

Illinois Governor's Office

<http://www.illinois.gov/gov/>

Illinois General Assembly

<http://www.ilga.gov/>

State of Illinois Government and Services

<http://www.illinois.gov/government/gov/legislature.cfm>

National Conference of State Legislatures

<http://www.ncsl.org>

Denver Office:
7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230
Phone: 303-364-7700
Fax: 303-364-7800

Washington Office:
444 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Suite 515
Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-624-5400
Fax: 202-737-1069

Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)

One Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20001-1431
Phone: 202-336-7000
Fax: 202-408-8072
<http://www.ccsso.org/>

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202
Phone: 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327)
Fax: 202-401-0689
<http://www.ed.gov>